Peace Agreements and Insurgency in Tripura

Context: *Centre to sign pact with two armed groups in Tripura.*

➢ **Overview:**

- 12 important agreements signed for Northeast peace and prosperity.
- Three agreements specifically related to Tripura.
- Around 10,000 people have surrendered arms due to these agreements.

Insurgent Groups in Tripura

➢ **National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)**

- **Formation**: 1989
- **Objectives**: Seek an independent Tripura; disrupt state administration.
- **Activities**: Armed insurgency, extortion, violence.
- **Status**: Banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

➢ **All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)**

- **Formation**: 1990
- **Objectives**: Establish an independent Tripura through armed struggle.
- **Activities**: Militant activities, attacks on security forces, extortion.
- **Status**: Banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Key Historical Peace Agreements and MoS in north east India

➢ **Mizoram Accord, 1986**:

- **Parties Involved**: Government of India, Government of Mizoram, and Mizo National Front (MNF).
- **Outcome**: Creation of Mizoram as a full-fledged state with provisions for autonomy and development of the Mizo community.

➢ **Naga Accord, 2015**:

- **Parties Involved**: Government of India and Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) (NSCN-IM).
- **Outcome**: Framework agreement outlining broad principles for resolution, though detailed terms and implementation remain in progress.

➢ **Tripura Accord, 2019**:

- **Parties Involved**: Government of India, Government of Tripura, and National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT).
- **Outcome**: Surrender of NLFT cadres and integration into the political mainstream.

➢ **Bodo Accord, 2020**:

- **Parties Involved**: Government of India, Government of Assam, and Bodo organisations.
- **Outcome**: Establishment of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), with increased powers for the Bodo council and provisions for the development of Bodo areas.

➢ **Bru-Reang Agreement, 2020**:

- **Parties Involved**: Government of India, Governments of Mizoram and Tripura, and Bru organisations.
- **Outcome**: Commitment by the Home Ministry to finance the settlement process, aimed at resolving refugee issues and promoting regional stability.

➢ **Karbi Anglong Agreement, 2021:**

- **Parties Involved:**Government of India,Government of Assam,Five Insurgent Groups:KLNLF (Karbi Longri North Cachar Hills Liberation Front),PDCK (People's Democratic Council of Karbi),UPLA (United People's Liberation Army),KPLT (Karbi People's Liberation Tigers),KLF (Karbi Liberation Front)
- **Outcome:**5 militant organisations laid down arms and more than 1000 of their armed cadres have given up violence and joined the mainstream of society.

➢ **Strategic Significance**

- **Gateway to South-East Asia**: North-East India serves as India's land-bridge to Myanmar and beyond.
- **Act East Policy**: The region is crucial for India's eastward engagement and territorial frontier in Asia.

➢ **Cultural Significance**

- **Diverse Cultures**: Home to over 200 tribes, reflecting a rich cultural mosaic.
- **Festivals**: Includes notable festivals such as the Hornbill Festival (Nagaland) and Pang Lhabsol (Sikkim).
- **Unique Practices**: Dowry-Free Zone, distinct folk dance forms like Bihu (Assam), and sacred groves in Manipur (UmangLai).

➢ **Economic Significance**
- **Natural Resources**: Rich in Tea, Oil, and Timber (TOT).
- **Hydroelectric Power**: Potential for 50,000 MW of hydroelectric power.
- **Fossil Fuels**: Abundant reserves contributing to economic growth.

➢ **Ecological Significance**
- **Biodiversity Hotspot**: Part of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot with high avian and plant diversity.
- **Bear Species**: The region is home to all bear species present in India.

Government Initiatives for Northeast Development

➢ **Infrastructure and Connectivity Initiatives in North-East India**
- **Bharatmala Pariyojana:** Aims to develop key national highways and road corridors, benefiting the North-East region with better connectivity to the rest of India.
- **Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN:** Provides enhanced air services to smaller airports in the North-East, boosting regional integration and economic activity.
- **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project:** Development Includes road, waterway, and port development to improve trade and logistics.
- **India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway:** Create a highway connecting India, Myanmar, and Thailand to promote regional trade and connectivity.

➢ **Tourism Initiatives**
- **Swadesh Darshan Scheme:** Focuses on developing tourism infrastructure and attractions in the North-East to boost tourism and economic development.
- **Digital North East Vision 2022:** Promote digital infrastructure and services to enhance connectivity, governance, and service delivery in the North-East..
- **National Bamboo Mission:** Supports bamboo cultivation and industry, which is significant in the North-East due to its abundance of bamboo resources.

Defence Procurement and Modernization

Context:*DAC approved major defence acquisitions, including frigates, vehicles, and radars.*

➢ **Overview**:
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh,Approved for 10 capital acquisition proposals

➢ **Major Acquisitions**:
- **Stealth Frigates**
- **Future Ready Combat Vehicles (FRCV)**: **FRCV**

➢ **Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)**
- **Established:** 2001
- **Purpose**: Oversees and approves major defence procurement and acquisition projects.
- **Chairperson**: Defence Minister of India.
- **Key Members**:
  - Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) or Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC)
  - Secretary (Defence Production)
  - Secretary (Defence Finance)
  - Chiefs of Army, Navy, and Air Force
- **Responsibilities**:
  - Approval of high-value defence procurement projects.
  - Policy formulation for defence acquisition.
  - Budget allocation and management.

➢ **Major Defence Projects Approved**
- **Stealth Frigates**
  - **Project-17A**: Preceded by Project-17, aimed at modernising the Indian Navy with stealth capabilities.
  - **Stealth Technology**: Introduced to reduce radar cross-section and enhance naval operational capabilities.
  - **Previous Orders**: Earlier frigate classes like Project-17 (Shivalik-class) and Project-15A (Kolkata-class) established the foundation for advanced frigates.
- **Future Ready Combat Vehicles (FRCV)**
  - **T-72 and T-90**: Current main battle tanks in use; FRCV aims to replace these ageing systems.
  - **Previous Attempts**: Earlier efforts like the Arjun tank project faced delays and challenges.
  - **Modernization Drive**: Part of a broader effort to upgrade land combat systems in response to evolving threats.
- **Air Defence Fire Control Radars (FCR)**
  - **Previous Systems**: Earlier air defence systems included legacy radars and missile systems.
  - **Upgrades**: FCRs represent a move towards modern, integrated air defence systems.
  - **Strategic Importance**: Enhances India's capability to detect and engage aerial threats more effectively.
- **Dornier-228 Aircraft**
  - **Previous Use**: Dornier-228 has been used for maritime surveillance, transport, and reconnaissance.
  - **Modernization**: The latest acquisition aims to replace older aircraft and improve Coast Guard capabilities.

- **Enhanced Role**: Reflects a commitment to upgrading maritime surveillance and patrolling capabilities.

- **Next Generation Fast Patrol & Offshore Patrol Vessels**
  - **Previous Classes**: Earlier vessels were less advanced, with limited operational range and technology.
  - **Modern Needs**: New patrol vessels address the need for improved capabilities in maritime security and disaster response.
  - **Strategic Role**: Enhances the Indian Coast Guard's ability to conduct surveillance and response to maritime threats.

➢ **Modernization Initiatives**
- **Focus**: 99% of the approved AoNs are from indigenous sources under Buy (Indian) and Buy (Indian-Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured) categories.

➢ **Objective:**
- **Self-Reliance**
- Adherence to updated Defence Procurement Procedures (DPP) to enhance efficiency and transparency.

World Bank Report on India's Economy

Context: *World Bank revises India's GDP growth estimate to 7% for FY25 from 6.6%*

➢ **Overview**:
- Slower growth in industry and services; agriculture expected to rise.
- Decline in GFCF; trade challenges due to protectionism despite policy improvements.
- High urban youth unemployment (17%) and reduced global market share in labour-intensive sectors.

➢ **World Bank**
- **Formation**: Created in 1944 as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) alongside the IMF. Later,it was renamed as the World Bank.
- **Role**: Aims to provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries for sustainable development and poverty reduction.
- **Status**: One of the United Nations' specialised agencies.

➢ **Structure and Membership**
- **World Bank Group**: Comprises five institutions working together to support development efforts.
- **Members**: 189 member countries, including India.

➢ **Major Reports**
- **Human Capital Index**: Assesses the potential productivity of the next generation of workers.
- **World Development Report**: Focuses on global development challenges and solutions.

Note: *The Ease of Doing Business Report is no longer published.*

➢ **Five Development Institutions**
- **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)**
- **International Development Association (IDA)**
- **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**
- **Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)**
- **International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)**

➢ **Shareholding**
- **Largest Shareholders**:
  - **United States**: 16.41% of votes.
  - **Japan**: 7.87%.
  - **Germany**: 4.49%.
  - **United Kingdom**: 4.31%.
  - **France**: 4.31%.

➢ **Recent Projections for India**
- **India's GDP growth:** FY24 at 8.2%, revised to 7% for FY25, and projected 6.7% for FY26.

➢ **Sectoral Performance and Trade Projections**
- **Industrial Sector Growth**: FY24 at 9.5%, FY25 projected at 7.6%
- **Service Sector Growth**: FY24 at 7.6%, FY25 projected at 7.4%
- **Agricultural Sector Growth**: FY24 at 1.4%, FY25 projected at 4.1%
- **Trade Projections**:
  - **Exports**: FY25 at 7.2%, FY26 at 7.2%
  - **Imports**: FY25 at 4.1%, FY26 at 6.3%,
- **Foreign Exchange Reserves**: $670.1 billion (over 11 months of import cover).
- **Current Account Deficit (CAD)**:
  - FY24: 0.7%
  - FY25: 1.1%

➢ **Key Challenges Highlighted by the World Bank**
- **Urban Youth Unemployment**: Remains high at 17%, affecting overall economic stability.
- **Declining Market Share**: India is losing ground in labour-intensive sectors like apparel and footwear.
- **Slowdown in Industrial Growth**: Projected to decrease to 7.3% in FY26 from 9.5% in FY24.
- **Trade Barriers**: Increased protectionism and tariff barriers could impact trade despite improvements from the National Logistics Policy.

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4 September, 2024

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Wokha SAATHI WhatsApp Chatbot

Recently, the Wokha SAATHI WhatsApp Chatbot was honoured with the prestigious Gold Award at the National Awards for e-Governance Scheme 2023-2024 at the 27th National Conference on e-Governance held in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

About the Wokha SAATHI WhatsApp Chatbot:

- The Wokha SAATHI WhatsApp Chatbot is **an innovative initiative of the Wokha District Administration of Nagaland.**
- This initiative marks a significant milestone as it is the **first from Nagaland to receive a Gold Award** for its contribution to e-Governance.
- The **initiative uses an AI-based Smart Assistant called SAATHI** (Smart AI-based Assistant for Timely Help & Interface) to enhance government services.
- The chatbot **integrates over 40 government services into a single platform**, providing residents with easy access to essential services.
- It facilitates **two-way communication** between the government and citizens, allowing for real-time assistance and proactive Information Education Campaigns.
- The chatbot **operates on a 24×7 basis**, ensuring that residents have continuous access to vital information and services.

Drugs Controller General of India

Recently, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) approved ENTOD Pharmaceuticals' PresVu eye drops, designed to reduce reliance on reading glasses for individuals with presbyopia.

About the Drugs Controller General of India:

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is the **head of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation** (CDSCO).
- DCGI is responsible for **ensuring drug quality**, **approving new drugs**, regulating clinical trials, establishing medication rules and approving licenses for specific drug categories like blood products and vaccines.
- The **government appoints** the Drugs Controller General of India based on their qualifications and expertise in drug regulation.

Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation:

- Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation is the Central Drug Authority responsible for enforcing the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940.
- It operates under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.
- It serves as the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) for pharmaceuticals and medical devices in India.
- It is responsible for granting approval for the marketing of pharmaceutical drugs in India.

Standing Committees

Recently, Shashi Tharoor criticized the Centre over the formation of standing committees, questioning the process and its impact on parliamentary oversight.

About the Standing Committees:

- In the Indian Parliament, standing committees are **permanent committees** that **examine bills, policies** and the **functioning of various ministries** and departments.
- These committees are **constituted at the beginning of each session** of Parliament and continue until the end of the session.
- They are **responsible for examining demands for grants, examining annual reports, examining long-term policies** and facilitating informed discussion in the Parliament.
- There are **24 departmental standing committees** in total, with **16 under the Lok Sabha and 8 under the Rajya Sabha.**

Place in News

Brunei

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold talks with Brunei's Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah today on 4th of September.

Brunei (Capitala: Bandar Seri Begawan)

Location: Brunei is a country located on the northern coast of the island of Borneo in Southeast Asia.

Boundaries: Brunei shares its borders with t**he South China Sea** (North) and **Malaysian state of Sarawak** (East, West and South).

Physical Features:

- The highest point in Brunei is **Bukit Pagon.**
- The major rivers in Brunei are the **Brunei River, Tutong River** and **Belait River.**
- Brunei's primary minerals include **petroleum** and **natural gas**.
- Brunei has a tropical rainforest climate.

POINTS TO PONDER

- Who is the President of mongolia? **– Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh**
- Which state's tourism is associated with the Manaskhand Express? **– uttrakhand**
- What does the Waqf Bill pertain to? **– The Waqf Bill addresses the governance and management of waqf properties and institutions in India.**
- Core Application Software (CAS) is related to which central government scheme ? **– The Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS)**
- What is an Improvised Explosive Device (IED)? **– An IED is a homemade bomb designed to cause destruction or harm.**